

STONE FAMILY LETTERS

These Stone, Tracy, and Smith letters and other documents, ranging in date from 1818 to 1867, were passed down in the family. In December, 1994, they were transcribed by Roscoe Lee Strickland III, a great-great-great-grandson of Moses Stone and great-great-grandson of Regina Stone Tracy. Most of the letters were donated to the North Carolina Archives in 1998 and are now in the Manuscripts Department at the Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Some of the significant names and family relationships contained in the letters are as follows:

Amos Risinger	
Mahaly	wife of Amos Risinger
George L. Smith	cousin of Regina Stone Tracy
Hancock Smith	
James Smith	
Jane Smith	
Jubilee Smith	son of George L. Smith
Aaron Stone	
Ambrose Stone	brother of Moses Stone
Ann wife	of Tilmon Stone
Catharine Smith	
Bushrod W. Stone	son of Ambrose and Matilda Stone
Ceborn	
Clifford Stone	son of Hillory and Matilda Stone
Dilmas	
Henry Stone	brother of Moses Stone
Hillory Stone	brother of Moses Stone
Jefferson	
Jane	
John	
Louisa Stone	daughter of Ambrose and Matilda Stone
Lovy	sister of Catherine Stone and Matilda Stone
Martha daughter	of Catherine Stone
Matilda Stone	wife of Ambrose Stone, sister of Catherine and Lovy
Matilda Stone	wife of Hillory Stone
Moses Stone	husband of Catharine Stone, brother of several Stones
Nancy wife	of Tarpley Stone
Pharis Stone	brother of Moses Stone
Regina Stone Tracy	daughter of Moses and Catharine Stone, wife of J. W. Tracy
Richard	
Samuel Stone	
Sinthy wife	of John
Tarpley Stone	son-in-law of John
Tilman Stone	brother of Moses Stone
William Stone	
Zealy Stone	brother of Tilman Stone
J. W. Tracy	husband of Regina Stone Tracy

Roscoe L. Strickland III

A plat map in old family papers

“Resurveyed the above Tract of land containing Fifty Nine acres and a half for Zealy Stone this 23rd day of February 1818

Richard Thomson”

Letter from Hillory and Matilda Stone to Mr. Tilmon Stone, Spartanburg, SC

“Georgia Frankling County June 02, 1823

Deer brothers and friends I tak this opportunity of inform you that we are all well at present hoping theses few lines will find you all in the same stat of health I have not heard from you sence I recev. Henry Stone letter April 1st 1823 and I under stood from him that all hopes of life was gone with my mother and it griv my heart sore that I could not come to see her I did want to see her very bad once more I have never hear wher she is ded or living but I have giv it over that she is d I have nothing strainger to inform you of at presant I want to see you all once more again but I doute the oppertunity of it I want one of the boys to come out to see me this summer The one that can mak it the mos convenient Tilmo Stone or Moses Stone or Faris Stone for I have commence the hating bizness and mak a bad out and I want instruin from you for I can get as much work as I can doue the bizness I can inform you that the times is very hard heare know wheat cropes is sorry but corn cropes is very good at this time I will stop with a few more words I have got the fines little son you most ever saw and his name is grand ol Clifford Stone born March the 16 1822 Matilda Stone sends her compliments to you all So nothing more but we remayn your loving brother and sister until D

H Stone

& M Stone”

Letter of recommendation

“Madam this is to inform you what we the near neighbours of Mr. Stone believe concerning him & what his deportment in life has given us ground to believe he is a man of extraordinary morals he is an honest well _____ young man very industrious & enterprising a good farmer on a small scale & we believe well calculated to plan & manage business for a quantity of hands he is not a tradesman in wood but very ingenious & can do any business of that kind that is necessary in a farm upon the whole we believe he is almost in every respect such a man as will suit your case

Witness our hands this 20th January 1824,

Freeborn Whitby

John

John

Henry White

D R Burns

Benjamin Poole

William

James T M Carter”

Harmon

Kirby Capt

Reid

Deed for a slave

“South Carolina - To all to whom these presents shall come know ye that in as much as my daughter Catharine Smith has recently purchased a certain Negro man named Fill, from Hancock Smith, for a valuable consideration paid to him, which Negro I purchased at the sale of my decd. husbands estate, now, in order that the title of sd. Negro may be fully vested in her the said Catharine, know ye that I hereby release & relinquish all manner of claim to said Negro, to her the said Catharine her heirs & assigns forever - Witness my hand & seal this twentieth day of May eighteen hundred & twenty six
Test Jane Smith (SS)
D Whity”

Receipt for distribution from James Smith's estate

“I do hereby acknowledge that I have received from Jane Smith Administratrix of James Smith Deceased the of two hundred and seventy two dollars & 50/100 it being in full of my wife Matilda distributive share of her father James Smith personal estate for which I did several years ago give a receipt April 23, 1826
Ambrose Stone”

Letter from Moses Stone to Hillory and Matildy Stone, Franklin County, Georgia

“South Carolina Spartan burgh district der brother and Sister I take my pen in hand one more time to let you know that I am well at this time and I hope these few loins will find you in the same state of heth. I did receve your letter that was dated in May with a grate deal of pleasure. I am now at James bredeloves with in 5 mile of the corthous and I am paying one dollar per week and the reason that I am a liveing her is that I did try some of my near friends to borde me and they would not unles I would pay them eight dollars per week and another reson is that I am here is be caus ther has note one of my friends paide one cent of money and for John Stones part I have not herd from him but one time since I left him and I do not know what to think of him and if him nor no other man will pay me I do not know what I shal do for I am gone pecees and makes but little in the shop for times is hard here I under stand that you do lay of to come in this fall and if you do come in a bright cort I do think if I can meete my arangements aside think I shal go a longe home with you but how long I shal stay with you hit is uncertain for the probability is that I may have catharine with me when I do come and if I do and was to go on to the alabama I shal bee in a hurry you may know and if I donte go on ther I may stay a fiw days with you and if John Stone does not come in I dont think I shal go all the way this insuing year and if hit will sute your coveniang to come in I shal be vary glad to see you come in this fall and your friends wuld all be glad to see you come in one more time I think for if you do not come in they wil not see you some for they are all here in this pore contry and cant spare the time to go to see you and there is not one of them that will move some if ever for they talk but avary little about moveing enaway they ar all in thrald a little in debt Samuel Stone has purcht two negroes one man and one woman and aron Stone is in debt \$50 dollar to the doctor for tende on him last winter I will tel you wher all the brothers is tilmon Stone is alive ing with me at James breedlove but we shall quit ther in a short time I do think with out time dos git better pharis Stone has taken up shop at tollisons old place and dos bord abve ham lemaster and henry Stone he did set in with coloniel collins to over see and did stay 2 month and then did quit now is a doing nothing worth mutch he dos talk some times like he will go and see you but he has got no hors and I dont think he will go unles some one dos go with him out there if then the brothers is all a liveing a single life yet and ther is no talk of there marring at this time as I here I will tel you a little concerning the crops they wheat crops is better here this year than they have bean for some tim but corn in this settlement is wors than they have bean in a good many years back I have nothing that is worth your atte at this as I know of but I want you to send me word whether you will come in this fall or not and I want you to send me word how you are a come ing on in the shop and the rest of your concers and if you do send I want you to send me word buy the first chance if you pleas I am at this time in the shop at breedloves on the sabbath evening and I feal a

good deal like John a matthes at this time you may be shore but if I had the chance I would bet one barriel of corn on the rose pathe buy granna so I shal conclud my letter so no more wishes you not to forgit me hillory stone and matildy stone all inquiring friends this 20th day of august 1826

Mos. Stone to Hillory Stone and matildy Stone”

Will of Ambrose Stone

The following will of Ambrose Stone was among some old family papers once in the possession of Robert Lee Durham, and currently (1994) in the possession of Lucy Durham Strickland. Evidently, this will was never taken to court and offered for probate. Ambrose moved to Alabama in 1844 and probably wrote another will later.

“State of South Carolina}
Spartanburg District }

I Ambrose Stone of the District and State aforesaid, do ordain this my last will and testament, in maner and form following. Being very low in body but perfectly in a sound mind 1st I resign my body to the dust, and my soul to God who gave it.

2d I wish all my lawful and just Debts to be paid.

3d I give and bequeath to my dear beloved wife Matilda Stone all my property after all my just debts are paid for her to keep and dispose of as she may think propper.

4th I appoint my beloved wife Matilda Stone and my dear brother Moses Stone my executors of this my last will and testament.

Signed in presence of

Robert James (Seal) Ambrose Stone (Seal)

William Stone (Seal)

February the 5th 1842”

Letter from Ambrose Stone to Moses Stone, Spartan Burgh, South Carolina

“Alabama } March 21st 1844

Moses as I expect you want to heare from me after the long fatigue of five weeks and six days we _____ retch the pormis Land the star pole of cuntry on bull mountain wheare I found brother John & all his family well we in hour struggles have got on the Jordon sid with out loss or sickness we are all well at this time thank god and I feel vary well satisfied with the cuntry so far I have rented a plantation from Winston Stidham John son in-law tarpoly is liveing with him this yeare. Moses to stop you from wonder of my long travell I will tell you how I became so long on the road I staid with Hilry from tusaday untill thursday I then com to Jefferson and staid from saturday untill Sunday wecke I then com on to Los Creek and I staid from tusday untill thursday I then come on to John which maid the eight of January which was the cause of wet weather by while at Jeffeson I was in town with W.E. Mcdanel W.P. Underwood and old Zachariah Mcdaniel I in joied my selfe in the full extent of the above named friends while at Los Creek I

was refer to Wm. Turner a brother to Elisha Turner & he told me that old sida Watson got marid last July Moses let me turn back while I was at Jefferson I went up to gails Vill to see oald uncle Bazzell Scot I saw shwou at his son John he looks & favors him selfe vary much John is quit _____ his hat he is a temprit man and says that he will be Dam if he wold give Moses Stone _____ Moses as I have just got home from Abberdeen I will tell you somthing a bout hit it is a bout fifty miles from wheare we live salt is two dollars per sack coffee is from nine to twelfe and halfe cents sugar from nine to ten cents per pound Iron seven cents castings seven cents as for the balance of markit is something like that of Columbia I was in Abberdeen the ninth of March and as I came home I saw a heap of wheat in the boot and black berys allmost in blossom but up hear the Spring seems to bee a good deal like that of old Spartan Burgh wheat looks better hear than I ever saw theire at this time a yeare this cuntry in my opinion is a clean furtile cuntry heare is and has been the gratist plase for a pore man to git a home that I ever saw heare is purty good land at twelve and halfe cents per Acor now and if you ever in tend move out hear the sooner the better as for the taile that Finnis T. Bethany told their was all truth but the best of the land is taken up but hear is a heap of land as good as yourn now at twelve and half cents per Achor John says that he is a going in this summer and he says that if you dont come in this spring he says that if Zealy wil come out heare that he will take in a wagon and help him to move out hear and in my opinion he had better come and John says that if you dont come out this Spring he wanst you to write him whether Zealy will come or no kow I think for my part he wold do well in coming out hear as for my part I am well pleasd with the exchang of cuntry Moses if you do come out this Spring I want you to go down to my old place hunt for my pircher and them sheep that I left their and if you come in a wago I want you to bring me three or fore bunches of spun yarne Tilmon watid me to writ to him whether Little Tilmon got the houn that he sent him F.T. Bethany lost hir on the road I wold have rote sooner but the post office is between twenty five and thirty miles and as I am going up their to a big muster in stid of Bushrod I thought I wold take hit a long because the office was handy the famly has sent their compliments to sister golightly
Nothing more Ambrose Stone”

Letter from Zealy Stone to Catharine Stone, Spartanburgh, South Carolina

“Georgia Union County} Dear sister I onste more after my best respect tou take my pen in hande to wright a few lines to you to let you know that we are all in maderate helth at presente hopeing this fiw lines may finde you and yours enjoying the same blessing I must inform you that I have had a hard spell of sicknes and is just geting about again I have nothing good to sende you for this is the hardest place to live that ever I saw I am working the shop the most of my time I have a small crop on hand to the amount of 4 or 5 acres crops looks tollerble well corn is worth from 50 to 75 cent per bushel bacon is worth 8 or 10 cents I must inform you that I am by no means sitled hear Dear Sister I want you to sende mee my horse if you can allso sende me worde what Calvin is a doing and how he is a coming on all so how moony Harry is a coming on an what sort of a crop hee has got and send mee word how William Stone likes the cuntry whare he has been Dear Sister I have one word of advice for you that is for you not to sell your possessions to moove to no cuntry tell you go and see it first for if you brake your self up from whare you are you will never get fat again as you are thare Dear Sister I wante see you one time if I can I wante you to wright to me as quick as you can so no more but remains yours
June the 28 1846 Zealy Stone

[on the back of the same piece of paper]

Tillmand Stone

Dear brother A few lines I have nothing good to send to you more than my well wishes I wante you to sende mee worde whare you are liveing and how you are coming on all so sende me words if you know

any thing about amos homes and how he is a doing an whate the times is in that cuntry all so I want to know if you have heard from ambrose and how is a doing dear brother I wante you to send me worde aboute the murder of nate vance and hoo was in the scrape thar has come different noose to this cuntry about it and I wante to know the truth of it so no more but remains you affectionet brother till Death
June the 28 1846 Zely Stone”

Letter from Ambrose Stone to Catharine Stone, Spartan Burgh District, SC

“Alabama Marion County June 7th 1846

Catharine I have pick up a hart to right to you wonst more to see if I can git any word from you for I hant had the scrap of a pen from you since Moses death Gardener came to see me in March he told me that he understood from W. E. McDaniel that you was pesterd a bout youre security and saile of property it maid me feel mighty bad to heare that Gardner told me that he understood that a grait many pore people must suffer for bread in Spartan Burgh he father told me that Zealy and all his family had moved a way Caty I think hard of you for not righting to me for I want to hear from Spartan burg mighty bad I want to hear how you all maid out last winter and this spring with youre stock I under stud that the drouth was mighty bad Ritchard Willis come to see a Christmas and said that he got a letter from their and sad that Love only maid three waggons loads of corne well that a heap better than some maid their for Gardner told me that Thomas Hurt put all his crop of corne in to three salt sacks when he startid to Cherokee well I think that Sister Love pack it on him and I say whoraw for my kinn we have had the coldist winter and the latist spring that has been knone in this this country many years wheat harvist is just threw the wheat is pirty good in this country I have maid one hundred and twenty dozzen I whp out sit dozzen yesterday and hit maid two bushells and if you will come over to see me I will give you a cake I recon you want to know something a bout the rest of the family there all well Tilla and Bush Rod and Zealy sis is in the swamp gitting huckkles berys Agaline and Louesa gone to meeting to heare old sister Jannas funeral preach and I am setting righting this letter asburssa as I can by my self and and alone Caty if you cold come out hear and be satisfid to live hear wed all be tarnateous glad when you get this letter I want you to right to me as quick as you can I want to know whether you got them letters that I rot to you one I rot I think June and the other in November I want you to right to me all a bout my old nabors what has become of them I want to know is dead moved or marred I want to know whether Moses collected my money before he died or if you have and if you have any chance to send it to me I wold be glad Tilla says sinse Gardner come out to see her that she is become satisfid with the country she says that if you and Love wold move out hear that she wold be perfectly satisfid she says that she wanst to see you and Love mighty bad she says tell Rejiner howda for her she says give Fanna Barnett her compliments we have had a mighty wet spring and summer so fare my crop looks pirty well so fare Gardner and Angaline went to see John Allen and Ritchard theare ware well to them Tilla says she wanst you to right to her wheare Lette Lynch move to what State and County James Smith my compliments to you and family I have nothing straing to right to you I think that this wold be a mighty ____ country for you to live in and I think if you was out hear you wold like this country pirty well James I want you to right to me some good tailes from old Spartan Burgh Tilmon as I have nothing more to right to you than on the facd of the letter I want if you ever see R. O. Black David McCoy give them my compliments and tell them that I wold be glad to see them Tilm I want to know whether Thomas P. Story ever got any letter frome or not

Ambrose Stone”

Letter from Ambrose Stone to Mrs. Catharine Stone, Spartanburgh District, SC

“Alabama Marion County March 6th 1847

Caty I am rightin this letter with a hope that you will right to me when you get this for I hant got but one letter since Moses died and that I got from you the 16 of September you promist to right to me as soon as you cold but alas it never came I wold have rote to you sooner but Tilla was takin sick on the seventeenth

of January and she remaind bad so long that I thought that I wold waite to see whether she wold recover or not she has got so that she can situp a little and walk about the house at this time but she mends sloo for the first nine day when morning come I thought she wold live till night and when night come I thought she wold not live till morning the rest of us is well as common tilla and me went to see John Allen and Richard Willis last November and they all well and Richard is married to a Miss Easter huston and he calds her Queen Easter Caty in talking a bout them I thought it a proper time to request a favor of you Joseph Allen is again in this summer and I want you to send me some money and as soon as I can git able to come and see you I will for I stand in need of money the worst I ever di and I feel lik that I wold be the farthist from rongin you as any man on earth and if you conclud to send it you must right to me soon enuf for me to go and see Allen Caty you requested me to come out last fall but it was out of my power for I have had bad luck with my horses old Pol died last summer was a year and old Dol got down in June and I had to lift hir up untill October and I give her a way so you may know that I am climing the pole and it skind Caty that and the like is the reason that I dinot go to see you last fall alltho I dont go to see you theres scarce a day but my mind is there and me a talking with you and Lovy and Molly and telling some big tales and I recon if I cold see you al you wold see as proud an old fool as you ever saw on the 25 of February I went to a sale and their I saw Robert Nolen rite from the rolen mill and I recon I ast him five hundred qustions he kowd nothing a bout you but he cold tell me that Lova had been at his house and all a bout Molly and her famly and said he saw Tilmon the first monday in November and said all was well ther he told me that Jef was maried but cold tell her name but laughft and said she was a father to _____ he come home with me and staid all knight he told me all a bout the distrust situation of the pore people and said that thousans had moved a way I want you to right to me all a bout my old nabors I want to know all a bout them Polly you want to no something a bout Tarp he is well and started to Abberdeen yesterday and said you and Ceborn had neglected righting he said he had rote three letters and cold get know answer Tilla says she wanst to see you and Caty and Lovy mity bad I want you to right to me how you and Lova maid out throu the hard times and who lived with you then and who lives with you now we have had the coldis and wettis winter that I have seen since I lived hear Tilmon I wold have rote a letter to you but I have nothing to right than I have rot and I was like the man when he roat the deed I thought what one woman knood all men soon wold know I have talked to John about that power of attorney and when Jane talked with him about it he says that he will send it but I think if you ever get hit you will have to come after hit I wold be glad to know when you heard from Zealy and whether he wanst to go back or know if this ant worth a mess and I will do better next time

Ambrose Stone”

Letter from Matilda Stone to Catharine Stone, Spartanburg, South Carolina

“The State of Alabama; Marion | August the 13th 1848 dear beloved Sister and Sister this is the first oportunity I hav imbrasted to wright to you to let you no that we are all well at the presant thank God probably you want to kno some thing a bout our travel from your house home we got home the 3 day of November and we found all well and doing wel perhaps you want to kno some thing a bout our agreement he harped at me for four days and nights but I heded your advise and at last he dropt it and we traveld on to hilrys and got their a friday morning and left a sunday morning when we got thare they we all well and we stoped at Nancy Rakestraws a bout two days and we found them all well then we started for cherokee and we found them all well Elviry was up and about and William Golitly Shook has got black eyes Caty I want you to write to me what you dun with Zelys old place and whether bote your place plase or let sell or not and what has be came Fosters old plase and what has became Pollys plase and whether Nancy is mad or not and what has became of George Newten whether he is living their or moved away and tell me what has became of Cebern and what has became of Tilmon and let me no who is ded or mared something a bout all Now I will tell you some thing about our crops. crops is jenerala good through this section of country now I will you some thing John and his famaly in the plase they are all well. Tarpley and Nancy

Stone is mared and was mared March the 23rd moved the 29 and moved a bout 4 miles off and John and his young wife has fell out with Tilmon and Ann and has tremendous famaly quarel and has never made peas nor no likely hood of it. Sisters me and my famaly is out of all such scraps for the people does not equal us with them Thare came two men out of the settlement of John _____ they said John and Sinthy was well and famaly thare crops are verry good tell Lovvy Ricard and his wife little son is well and doing well Caty I forgot to tell you Amos Risinger and Mahaly sold out and is going to Lucanna or texes but he think he will setle in texes Dilmas has sold his land and has bee hunting him a pase to move to and in fact they all want to move and I am shure they dont want to go worse than I want them to go Caty read this letter to Lovvy tell Lovvy want to no how she is cameing on wen you receive this letter write back as soon as possable and direct your letter to Bushrod W Stone I send my respects to my frends and connection

Matildy Stone”

Letter from Matilda Stone to Catharine Stone

“State of Ala Marion County

May the 29 1856 Dear Sister I grasp mi pe this morning to in form yo that I am well at this time hoping the few lins will finde yo an all well Caty I will state some thing a bout the presant and past crops in fifty 3 and in fifty 4 we had mity bad crops but in 55 we had mity good crops and the presant spring bids far for a nuther good crop year Caty mi general helth is purty good considring mi age except pan which I am accustom to at times Caty I must tell yo something a bout the childrin bushrod tends a barn clost to me he bords with me luesa livs with me she is a good morral girl and me and her gets a long mity well lis is carrding on a tan yard 8 mils from me and is doing tolerubil well I will drop the subject of mi famala affars Caty I got a letter from G L Smith which informe me that yo was going to brake up house keeping and was going to liv with your oldest daughter and that all of you childring was of age ande wanted thar money Caty we got a letter from ned McDonnel which in formed me that all of your childring was all marred but martha Caty the laste letter I got from you was in fifty 3 ambrose rote you ansur soon after it Caty when I hearde of you brakin up house keeping I was affraide that it hade ruined yo for ever if yo get this letter i want yo to rite to me all about your surcumstans let it be god or bad Caty as i cante rite mi self I wante yo to make it your duty to rite to me and i will ansur yo as much as posable as we liv a long ways from the offis ande do note harbure the notionn that mi affecttions ar groing coalde to wards yo I woode be glad to se a letter from yo at all time as yo feel like a childe more than a sister Caty giv mi beste respects to all of your childrin and to lovy and all of her childrin ande to all of the black ons I muste bring mi letter to a cloas so no nour at presante but remains your sister untel deth

Matilda

Stone”

Letter from George L. Smith to Catherine Smith Stone

“Dear Caty your last letter to me dated September 6-1858 and Tilleys dated September the 26th are both on the Table before me I have read them often and have just have just finish,d reading them again Tilleys letter being directe to Jacksonville where I had not been in the habit of receiving letters from my friends at that place the letter had been there some time before I knew of its being there I consequently call,d and received it you can form no Idea of the feelings I had when I saw her name assign,d at the bottom It awoke up all the simpathys of my soul I could just sit, think, and weep, over the recollection of by gone days to gether with the history of the deep distress produced by the repeated cases of mortality in her family twice in one month was the Shaft of Death leveled at certan branches of her family (To wit) Wm. in his 20th year and John in his 17th year and Angeline ten years afterwards these occurrences are to us some times the begining of sorrows I feel an increasing desire to see you all once more before I go to my long home, I long to see you to talk over the things of Eternity, and till each other of our prospects of

enter into that rest prepared for the people of God. one of my sons Jubilee by name and I have agree,d to visit North Carolina this coming summer we shall take the Carrs If we should we shall want to Preach a mongst you a little he is a good Preacher when Tilley wrote her family were well the last account from our Children, they were well except one of my grand Daughters who has been in bad health for several years my son George B Smith was to see us a little time before Christmas, also, one of our Grandsons, John T. Smith, Tendersons, son also John Lynch from Old Orange County who is Unkle John Lynch,s grandson Our youngest Daughter Maried in the first of October moved off on the Eighth to the far west (To wit) Arkansas or the far edge of Lucianna our youngest son will set out for Georgia in a few days to go to school the old woman and me will be left alone as we began These lines leaves me as usual in good health for a man of my age time is waring out the old people I try to take the admonition of Holy writ, be ye also ready I am trying to trim my Lamp and to have my light buning with the oil of Gods grace Caty the The throne of Grace is a dlightfull place for us old people to visit, there we can our spiritual strength renewed and many a bad feeling removed Oh how good God is to those who put their trust in him he never leaves them he will be with his faithfull one through all their troubles and in the hour of Death he will cheer them with his presence through the glow my vale to the relms of Eternal Glory such appears to be the language of Holy writ upon which I rely this letter was commence a few days ago since I commenced this letter I received a letter from my Daughter who went to the west They have settled in the far edge of Lucianna within 2 miles of the Arkansas line they are well pleased with the Country saying the Country is levil and very rich bringing from twelve to fifteen lbs of cotton to the Acre a good hand can make ten bales of cotton the season a good hand hires for 250 to 300 dollars pr. season and the Country promises good health fine water and a good state of society I hope I neednot say to you I have sent you my likeness as I trust you have received it some time before Christmas I hope you will write to me oftin as soon as the spring opens I intend to set out to see Tilley before the infirmty of Old age puts a stop to me for ever remember my love to the Doctor and all your dear Childre altho I have never seen them I esteem them highly for your sake, once more farewell Caty, Remember me
February the 23 1859 George L. Smith”

Letter from J. W. Tracy to his wife

“Kinston, North Carolina

March 19, 1862

My dear Wife,

I wrote you a few lines last Sunday by Wm. Sifford of Gaston, giving you a short detail of our battle retreat and my safety, I now grasp my pen to give you a more particular account which I think will interest you on my account as it was my first battle, and also be interesting to you for your own dear country's sake.

On Wednesday evening the 12th, news reached us that the Burnside Fleet was in fifteen miles of us, steaming slowly towards our batteries and encampment and of course the order was for every man to prepare for battle in a short time our regiment was ready, and at 3 oclock Thursday morning we were ordered, that is all our forces consisting of about four thousand infantry, three companies of flying artillery and one regiment of cavalry, to our entrenchments and be ready to meet the foe in mortal combat, our entrenchment was about two miles long, extending from our batteries on the river on the railroad and the Yankees had to come up between the river on the one side and the railroad on the other side so as to attack our entrenchments, they commenced shelling us from their fleet early on Thursday and continued firing on us more or less all day without any injury to us save the wounding of two men. We did not return the fire on Thursday from the fact that they were out of reach of our guns tho many bomb shells busted over our head, our forces lay on their arms all night behind our entrenchments and waited for morning to bring on and renew the engagement. It rained all night on our soldiers but they bore it without a murmer and early Friday morning they commenced the attack in front of our entrenchments. We

understand with about twenty five thousand men and their fleet cooperating with their land forces. We fought them about four hours and could we have had any reinforcements we might have been victorious. The battle was well fought on our side the scene was so terrific and grand it beggars all description, in fact the roaring of their cannon from the fleet with the incessant musketry and answering of it from the entrenchments by our artillery and musketry made a noise as loud as ten thousand thunders and the roaring of many waters, I shall never forget the sound of those bomb shells whistling through the air and the terrific explosion over my head, our entrenchments saved our men very much, the cannon balls would strike the breast works without any effect and their bullets were puttering against it like a hail storm and whistling over it as thick as a bee swarm, and we were not idle all this time our flying artillery as well as our small arms was pouring a deadly fire in the midst of their advancing columns, in fact our artillery cut lanes of them down and it is said that the first fire of Captain Brim's artillery killed 56 of them. We drove them back several times and had the best of the fight all the time until our militia gave way on the right flank and at that time the enemy commenced a flank movement and our right which was weakened by the giving away of the militia. Our right wing could not stand so unequal a contest as there were ten to one against them. Therefore we were out flanked and our entrenchments were of no more use to us and we were then between the flanking columns and the fleet and no chance left us only to be cut all to pieces, surrender or retreat and of course our field officers preferred the latter and ordered us to retreat and for every man to save himself if he could. We did so with a small loss. We only lost something over two hundred men in all, killed, wounded and taken prisoners, and it was a dear bought victory to the Yankees, for we took one of their officers prisoner and he acknowledged we have killed fifteen hundred of their men and said we had them badly whipped if it had not been for that flank movement, I just described to you, but how that is I cannot tell, but I know one thing, we whipped them all the time until we were outflanked and over powered by numbers far superior to ours.

Well Gine, I have in a broken manner given you a description of our battle. I hope you may understand the larger part of it tho so badly connected. I said to you in the short letter I wrote you Sunday last that I was not disappointed in myself, in fact I was more cool and less excited than I expected to be, but all my curiosity to witness a battle has been gratified and as I said to you in my other letter, perfectly satisfied.

I expect our Regiment will leave this village tomorrow. We will go some six miles from here and where then I know not. You must write me on receipt and I do not know where to tell you to direct your letter, but I reckon this place, Kinston, N.C. I must close as it is growing dark and no more time to write. My other matters I hope will all be well. Wm. Briggs has not been to New Bern nor Huffstetter never saw him. You are at liberty to write to William what I think about that business. My love to Grandma, Node and Rush. Read the fighting part of this letter to all our neighbors. Tell all the negroes Howdy.

Yours

ever yours,

J. W. Tracy

P.S. I wrote you that the Yankees got all my plunder and of all of my loss I regret my coat you made me more than anything else. Dear wife you must make me another, will you not. If so I want you to commence it as soon as you get this. Make it the same color of the other and those fatigue shirts I shall need very much. I am sorry to trouble you for any thing but necessity compels me. It may be I am asking too much of you, if so do not trouble yourself about it. All the Companies from old Macklenburg are receiving large supplies from their friends at home since our great loss in this battle. I have but one coat with me now. I have money to purchase me a coat but it will cost me thirty or forty dollars and then not as good as the one you made me. Tell good Grandma and sweet Node to help you make me a coat. Tell Grandma the quilt she gave me is gone with all the rest of my bed clothes. It is now so dark I can not see the line, so I must close. Tell Rush to be a good boy, I will know all about my other arrangements the first of next month and will write you immediately. I would not hire myself to be shot at but I would not take five hundred dollars for being in that battle.

My dear wife I do wish I had a name dear enough to give you but I have not. Write on receipt, good bye my sweet one.

J. W. Tracy

When you write let me know if you got the letter I wrote you by Mr. Sifford."

Letter from R. M. Tracy to J. W. Tracy

"Kings Mountain, NC

December 26/64

My dear husband,

This will inform you of the reception of your very welcomed letter with the money and stamps that you sent by Capt. Gedney. Dr. honey you can better imagine how glad I am to hear you say you are coming than I can tell you. The time will pass slowly by and I do hope I may not be disappointed though I will try and prepare myself for it. I am glad to know you enjoy your selfe with the pretty ladies. I am glad to know there is some enjoyment left in the land somewhere. I reckon you think if I was only a single man such a nice time I could have and no doubt you could and I can tell you one thing I would rather know that you would have a nice time and enjoy your selfe better than ever you have done if you were only free to marry again than to be left a widow myselfe. There has so many friends and acquaintances gone for the last few years that it has done away with a great deal of the gloom that accompanys the idea of death. I would like to live but not a widow's life. I reckon you have heard of the death of Capt. C. H. Dickson. He was killed by a shell the 14 inst. I brought the dispatch to his wife from Shelby sent by Ben Dickson. She was sick and had been for two or three weeks. Poore LoveAn. I was sorry for her and Kelly the little fellow appeared to go almost frantic. The back of the Capt. head was tourn off one foot cut off and a knee broken. He lived about one hour. Billy Falls starts for his remains today. I have not said anything about the Yankees having Savannah for I did not think it worthwhile to make any comments for I cannot see what the Garis were doing to let old Sherman march on as he did he will take Charleston next I reckon & Augusta. Rush is doing well as far as I know he went to Shelby Wednesday and I have not seen him since. Nora went home with Zulia for a day or two and took measles before I could posably get to send for her. I was suffering so much myselfe at that time that I could not go and our darkies everyone had them at the same time but they are all on the mend and Nora is doing finely able to be up and all about so Mr. Durham wrote me Thursday. They treat her with a great deal of kindness. She will be at home before you come. Rush went to see Dr. Price about his furlough and from there to see Pike and I do not know what they have done for him. We are having a very dull Christmas oh Honey don't you wish this war would stop. I do not know which side will whip but neither side will be worth having when it is done. I do not believe. Well dear one I will close. Hopeing to see you Thursday week and then I will tell you all I think. We will all be so glad to see you. I am some better than I have been. So dear sweet one come come come.

Ever

R. M. Tracy"

yours,

Letter from Jubilee Smith to Regina Stone Tracy

"Americus Ga March 18th 1867

My Dear Cousin R. M. Tracy

I address you as cousin, from the fact I have before me a letter written Feb 14th addressed to my Father George L. Smith signed as above. I am reduced to the painfull necessaty of informing you that my Father G. L. Smith departed this life the 3rd day of March 35 minutes after 8 oclock A.M. He died in the full triumphs of a living faith, making mention of his Kin, and many friends who have long since left these mortal shores as well as many that are living. It would have rejoiced his soul, to have recvd this letter,

but he is gone leaving no doubts on our minds as to his blessed condition beyond the grave. Show this letter to my Aunt. I know she will rejoice to know of his happy departure. The balance of the connection are well. Mother is yet living but feeble, I fear she will not survive long, the grave. I live in the above named City practicing my professions both of medicine and dentistry. I think it is highly probable I shall pass through your state some time this year. I never had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of many of my Father's relatives on his Father's side. You said something about the southern proclivities of Dr Tracy & I can say as much of Father's opinions, he was a zealous southern man in every sense of the word, and refused to take the oath of allegiance to the United States and died so. The political horizon looks to me more dark than ever before; And what the end of all this is to be I can't tell. I think it highly probable that our lands will be confiscated. There is however but little difference in confiscation and taxation. My family are at present all well, and I can say as much for the connection, or was, a few days ago. your cousin

Jubilee Smith"